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WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) today criticized the Republican majority for using the House of Representatives to attack one member of Congress for his position on the Iraq war. The Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), with the support of Republican leadership introduced a resolution today that called for the immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq. The resolution was introduced to provide a platform for Republican members to attack Rep. John Murtha (D-PA), a decorated veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars, for his recent advocacy for a planned draw-down and withdrawal from Iraq. “This week the Senate, with an overwhelming bipartisan majority voted to require the president to submit a report to Congress on the progress of operations in Iraq and a plan to end the occupation and bring U.S. forces home.

“In partisan parody of that process, without holding a single hearing, the Republican Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Duncan Hunter, introduced a fabricated resolution to force a vote on the immediate withdrawal from Iraq. Not surprisingly, the position was overwhelmingly defeated by the House.

“To date, the Congress has failed its Constitutional duty by refusing to conduct oversight of this war. This is the only substantive action the Republican majority has taken on Iraq since we went to war.

“I have asked the president, following December parliamentary elections in Iraq, to negotiate with the new Iraqi government a plan to provide for their own security and begin a phased and orderly withdrawal of US troops. Until Iraqis take responsibility for their own security and their own future this war will remain an open-ended conflict.”